MARVEL COMICS

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

#31
#472

STRACZYNSKI
ROMITA JR
HANNA

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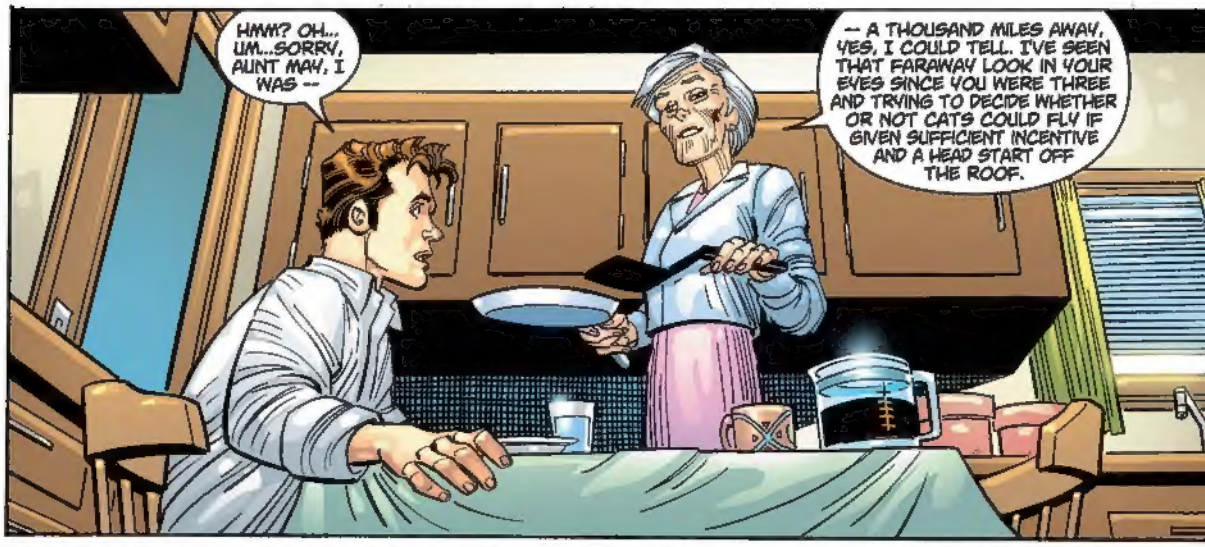
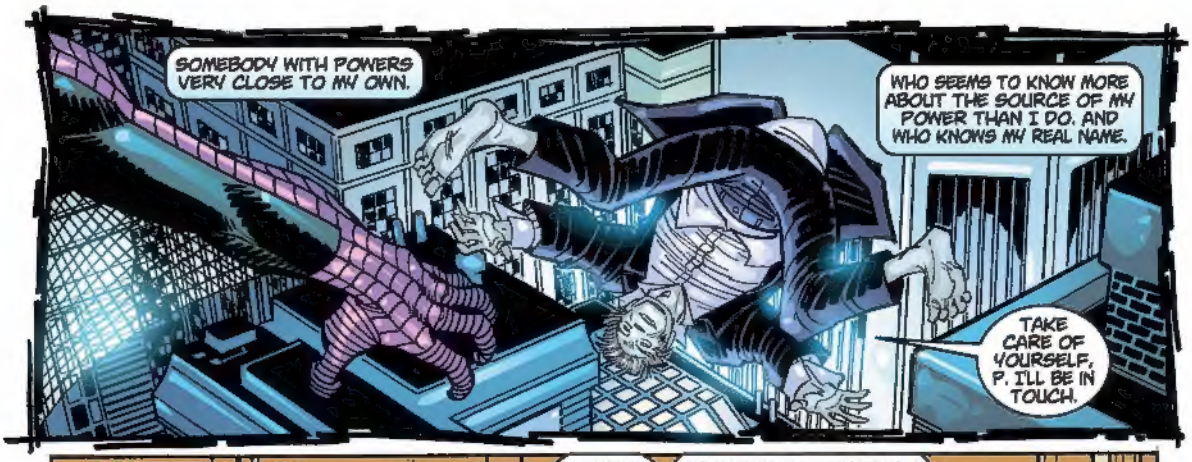
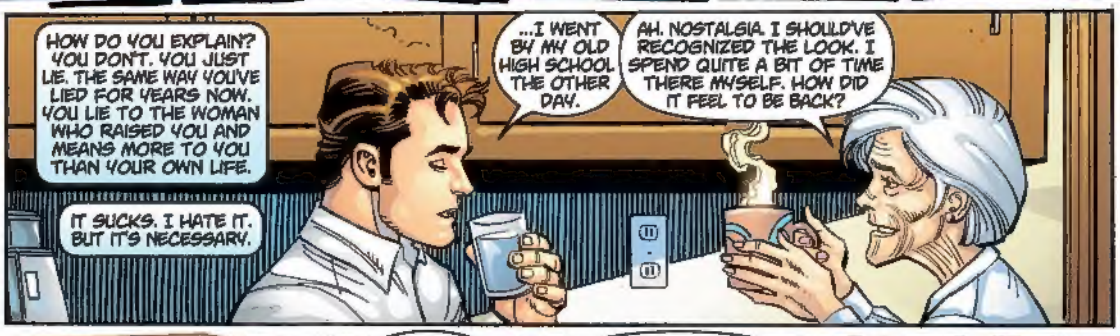

HMM? OH... UM...SORRY, AUNT MAY, I WAS --
-- A THOUSAND MILES AWAY, YES, I COULD TELL. I'VE SEEN THAT FARAWAY LOOK IN YOUR EYES SINCE YOU WERE THREE AND TRYING TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT CATS COULD FLY IF GIVEN SUFFICIENT INCENTIVE AND A HEAD START OFF THE ROOF.

WHEN THAT HAPPENS, I WAIT, AND REPEAT, JUST LIKE IT SAYS ON THOSE SHAMPOO BOTTLES, "WASH AND REPEAT," EXCEPT THERE'S NO WATER INVOLVED. EVENTUALLY, YOU COME BACK. YOU ALWAYS DO. IT'S JUST SOMETHING I'VE GOTTEN USED TO.
SO: PETER, LAST EGG. LAST EGG, PETER. WOULD YOU TWO LIKE TO GET TOGETHER?
YES, MA'AM.

SO ARE YOU GOING TO TELL ME WHAT'S GOT YOU SO DISTRACTED THIS MORNING? OR SHOULD I START CHECKING THE ROOF FOR MRS. BAILEY'S CAT?
IT'S...

HOW DO I EXPLAIN THAT LAST NIGHT SOMEONE I'VE NEVER MET BEFORE TURNED MY LIFE COMPLETELY UPSIDE DOWN?


SOMEBODY WITH POWERS VERY CLOSE TO MY OWN.
WHO SEEMS TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE SOURCE OF MY POWER THAN I DO. AND WHO KNOWS MY REAL NAME.
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, P. I'LL BE IN TOUCH.

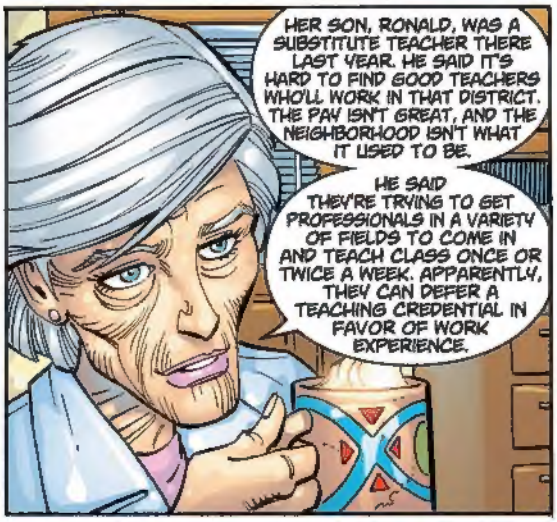

HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN? YOU DON'T. YOU JUST LIE. THE SAME WAY YOU'VE LIED FOR YEARS NOW. YOU LIE TO THE WOMAN WHO RAISED YOU AND MEANS MORE TO YOU THAN YOUR OWN LIFE.
IT SUCKS. I HATE IT. BUT IT'S NECESSARY.
...I WENT BY MY OLD HIGH SCHOOL THE OTHER DAY.
AH. NOSTALGIA. I SHOULD'VE RECOGNIZED THE LOOK. I SPEND QUITE A BIT OF TIME THERE MYSELF. HOW DID IT FEEL TO BE BACK?

WEIRD. IN SOME WAYS THAT SCHOOL WAS THE WORST PART OF MY LIFE. IN OTHERS, IT WAS THE BEST. BECAUSE THAT'S WHEN THINGS CHANGED FOR ME...
I MEAN, I CAUGHT SOME BREAKS, GOT BIT BY THE...SCIENCE BUG, STARTED SELLING MY PHOTOS TO THE BUGLE...THE SCHOOL WAS A REAL CHANCE FOR ME TO COME INTO MY OWN.
AND NOW...?
PS 10

NOW... IT'S KIND OF FALLEN ON HARD TIMES. FRAYING AT THE EDGES, COVERED IN GRAFFITI...I GET THE FEELING THAT NOW IT'S AN EVEN TOUGHER PLACE FOR KIDS WHO ARE...WELL, LIKE I WAS AT THAT AGE.
BRIGHT? GIFTED?
ALONE.
PS 108

WELL, YOU KNOW, I WAS TALKING WITH MRS. CHAMPFER THE OTHER DAY.

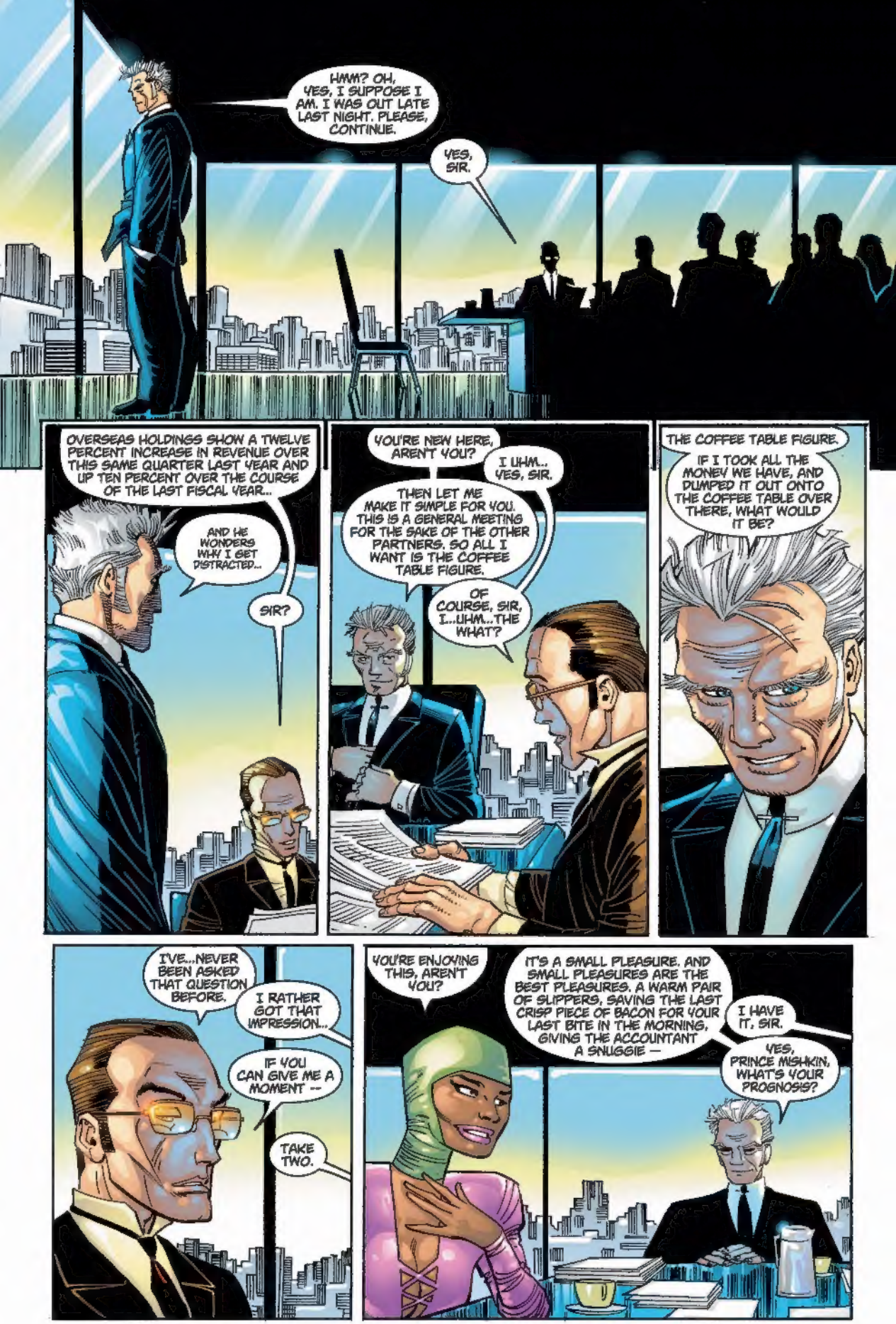
I SAID I WAS TALKING WITH MRS. CHAMPFER THE OTHER DAY.
I WENT AWAY AGAIN, DIDN'T I?
YES.
OH.


HER SON, RONALD, WAS A SUBSTITUTE TEACHER THERE LAST YEAR. HE SAID IT'S HARD TO FIND GOOD TEACHERS WHO'LL WORK IN THAT DISTRICT. THE PAY ISN'T GREAT, AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD ISN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE.
HE SAID THEY'RE TRYING TO GET PROFESSIONALS IN A VARIETY OF FIELDS TO COME IN AND TEACH CLASS ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK. APPARENTLY, THEY CAN DEFER A TEACHING CREDENTIAL IN FAVOR OF WORK EXPERIENCE.

SO WHAT ARE YOU SUGGESTING?
NOT A THING.
YES, YOU ARE.
NO, I'M NOT. BUT IF I WERE —
AH-HA!

IF I WERE... I'D SUGGEST THAT MAYBE YOUR SENSE OF FAIRNESS IS TELLING YOU THAT THE KIDS THERE TODAY AREN'T GETTING THE SAME BREAKS YOU DID. AND MAYBE YOU COULD REPAY A LITTLE OF THAT, GIVE BACK TO THE SCHOOL THAT GAVE YOU SO MUCH.
IF I WERE OF A MIND TO SUGGEST SUCH THINGS.
WHICH, OF COURSE, I'M NOT.

I LOVE WATCHING THE GEARS BEGIN TO TURN...
"YOU SEEM RATHER DISTRACTED, SIR..."

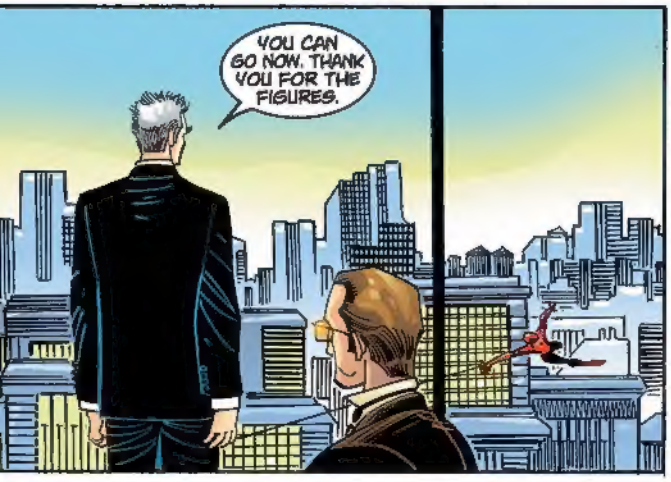

HMM? OH, YES, I SUPPOSE I AM. I WAS OUT LATE LAST NIGHT. PLEASE, CONTINUE.
YES, SIR.
OVERSEAS HOLDINGS SHOW A TWELVE PERCENT INCREASE IN REVENUE OVER THIS SAME QUARTER LAST YEAR AND UP TEN PERCENT OVER THE COURSE OF THE LAST FISCAL YEAR...
AND HE WONDERS WHY I GET DISTRACTED...
SIR?
YOU'RE NEW HERE, AREN'T YOU?
I UHM... YES, SIR.
THEN LET ME MAKE IT SIMPLE FOR YOU. THIS IS A GENERAL MEETING FOR THE SAKE OF THE OTHER PARTNERS. SO ALL I WANT IS THE COFFEE TABLE FIGURE.
OF COURSE, SIR, I...UHM...THE WHAT?
THE COFFEE TABLE FIGURE.
IF I TOOK ALL THE MONEY WE HAVE, AND DUMPED IT OUT ONTO THE COFFEE TABLE OVER THERE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
I'VE...NEVER BEEN ASKED THAT QUESTION BEFORE.
I RATHER GOT THAT IMPRESSION...
IF YOU CAN GIVE ME A MOMENT --
TAKE TWO.
YOU'RE ENJOYING THIS, AREN'T YOU?
IT'S A SMALL PLEASURE. AND SMALL PLEASURES ARE THE BEST PLEASURES. A WARM PAIR OF SLIPPERS, SAVING THE LAST CRISP PIECE OF BACON FOR YOUR LAST BITE IN THE MORNING, GIVING THE ACCOUNTANT A SNUGGIE —
I HAVE IT, SIR.
YES, PRINCE MISHKIN, WHAT'S YOUR PROGNOSIS?

ALLOWING FOR VARIATIONS IN REAL ASSETS VS. LIQUID ASSETS, AND TAKING INTO EFFECT THIS YEAR'S AMORTIZATION --
AHEM...
FIVE HUNDRED TWENTY-THREE MILLION, SEVEN HUNDRED FORTY THOUSAND DOLLARS... AND CHANGE.
THAT'S A VERY LARGE COFFEE TABLE, SIR.
IT'S A START.

NOW WE CAN GO OVER THE... UHM...

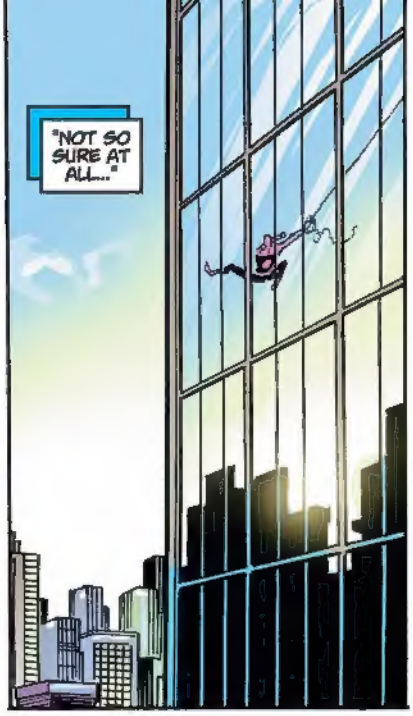
THAT IS...I CAN...SIR?

YES?
WHAT IS IT? I DON'T... SEE ANYTHING OUTSIDE.
NO, I DON'T EXPECT YOU WOULD.

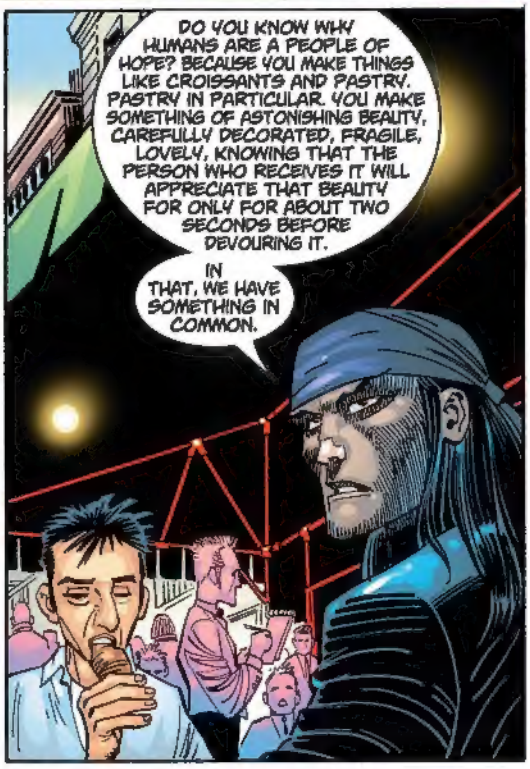

YOU CAN GO NOW. THANK YOU FOR THE FIGURES.

YOU MADE CONTACT LAST NIGHT, DIDN'T YOU? AGAINST ALL OUR RECOMMENDATIONS --
I DID.
I JUST HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING. YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE AT RISK HERE.
IF THIS GOES BADLY, IT COULD DESTROY ALL OF US. RATHER THAN FACE THAT PROSPECT, GIVEN THE CHOICE...

"...I'D RATHER IT WAS HIM THAN US. HE IS EXPENDABLE."
"IS HE? I'M NOT SO SURE...


"NOT SO SURE AT ALL..."

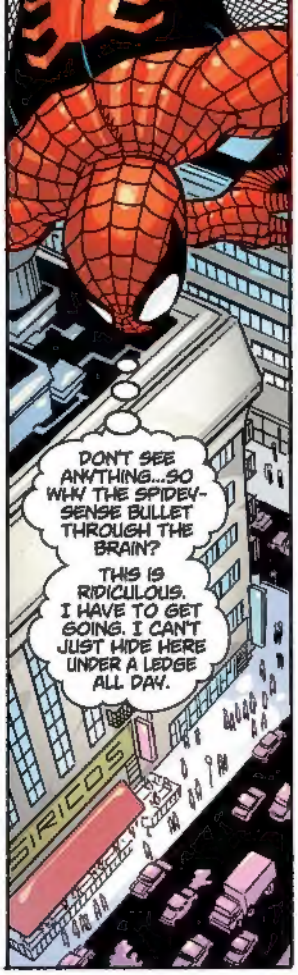
YOU HAVEN'T EATEN YOUR CROISSANT.
I GUESS I'M NOT AS HUNGRY AS I THOUGHT.
YOU SHOULD EAT. KEEP YOUR STRENGTH UP. I DO. BUT I'VE HAD LONGER THAN YOU TO ACQUIRE GOOD HABITS.
MUCH LONGER.
EAT YOUR CROISSANT, DEX.
YES, MORLUN.


DO YOU KNOW WHY HUMANS ARE A PEOPLE OF HOPE? BECAUSE YOU MAKE THINGS LIKE CROISSANTS AND PASTRY. PASTRY IN PARTICULAR. YOU MAKE SOMETHING OF ASTONISHING BEAUTY, CAREFULLY DECORATED, FRAGILE, LOVELY, KNOWING THAT THE PERSON WHO RECEIVES IT WILL APPRECIATE THAT BEAUTY FOR ONLY FOR ABOUT TWO SECONDS BEFORE DEVOURING IT.
IN THAT, WE HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON.

AND SPEAKING OF WHICH...

OHJEEZ —!

WHAT THE HECK WAS THAT? SPIDER-SENSE WENT NUTS, LIKE NOTHING I'VE EVER FELT BEFORE.
LIKE THE WORD *HIDE* WAS BURNED ACROSS *MY* BRAIN IN LETTERS TEN FEET HIGH.


DON'T SEE ANYTHING...SO WHY THE SPIDEY-SENSE BULLET THROUGH THE BRAIN?
THIS IS RIDICULOUS. I HAVE TO GET GOING. I CAN'T JUST HIDE HERE UNDER A LEDGE ALL DAY.
SIRICOS

I'LL JUST... SHOOT A WEB AND LEAP OUT THERE AND GET GOING ON MY WAY. I'LL JUST...

...SLIP AROUND THIS WAY.

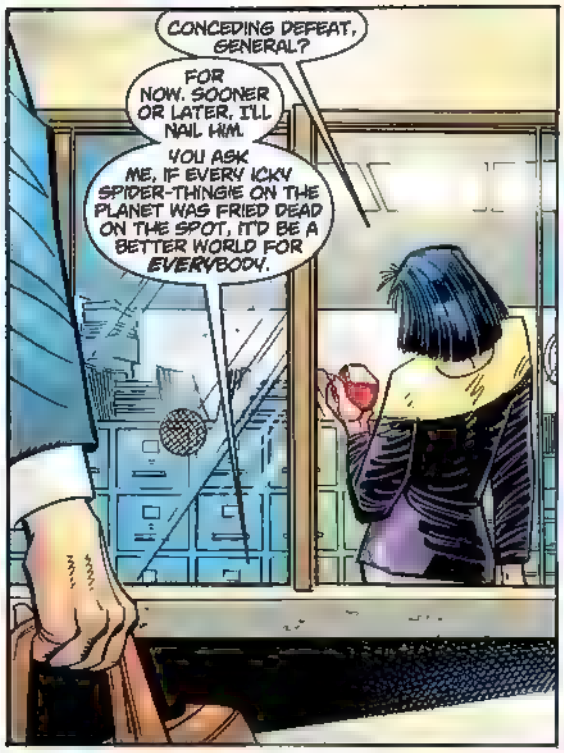
CAREFULLY DECORATED. FRAGILE. LOVELY. DOOMED.
SAD, REALLY. BUT THEN IT'S ALWAYS SAD. ALWAYS HAS BEEN, ALWAYS WILL BE. IT'S YOUR LOT, YOU KNOW, TO BE THINGS OF BEAUTY, HERE FOR A MOMENT, A FLICKER, AND GONE. SO SAD...

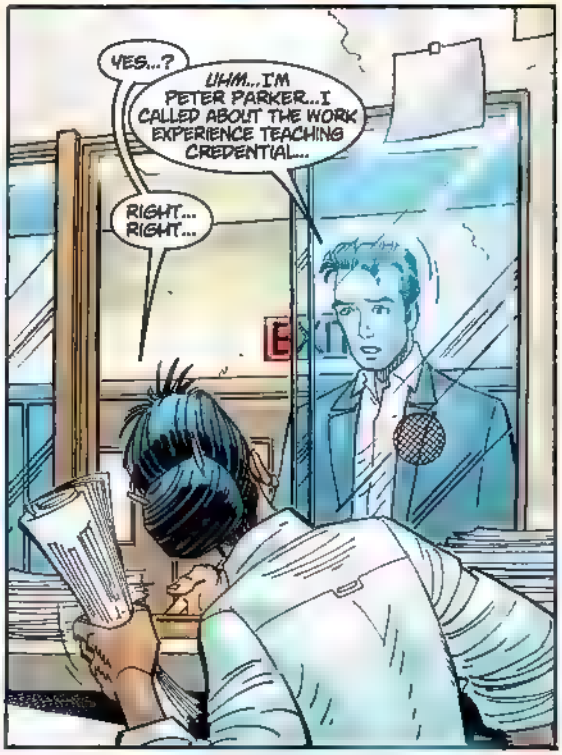
HOW WAS THE CROISSANT?
FINE.
GOOD.
KILL ME.
NOT TODAY.
SOON, THOUGH?
WE'LL SEE...

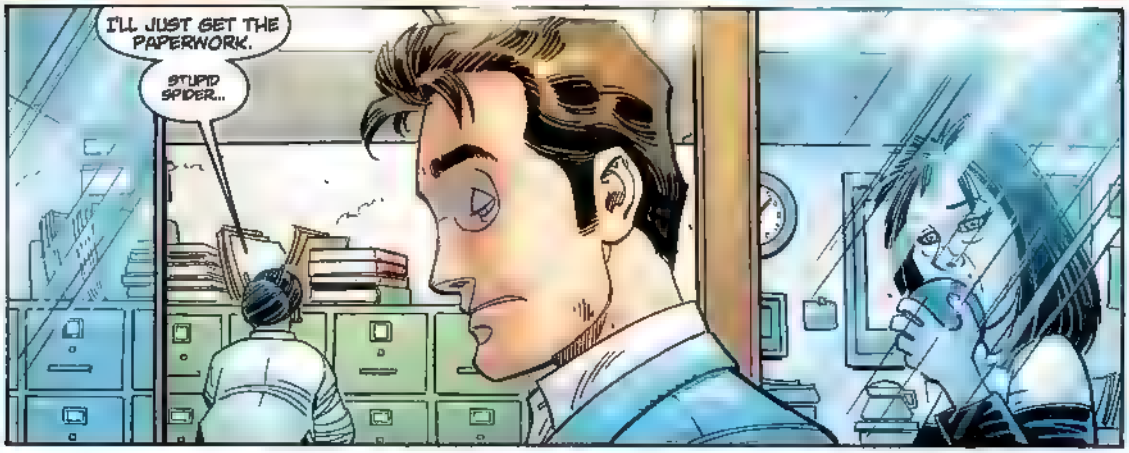
...NOW DRINK YOUR COFFEE. IT'S AN ORANGE MOCHA.
BEFORE IT GET'S COLD.
"ICK! SPIDER! GET IT!"

I HATE SPIDERS. I SWEAR THEY THEY JUST KNOW WHEN YOU'RE ABOUT TO SMUSH 'EM AND THEY SCURRY UNDER A LEDGE OR A DOOR AND YOU CAN'T GET TO THEM AND I HATE SPIDERS --
YOU MENTIONED THAT PART ALREADY.
EXIT

HATE HATE HATE HATE HATE HATE!


CONCEDING DEFEAT, GENERAL?
FOR NOW. SOONER OR LATER, I'LL NAIL HIM.
YOU ASK ME, IF EVERY ICKY SPIDER-THINGIE ON THE PLANET WAS FRIED DEAD ON THE SPOT, IT'D BE A BETTER WORLD FOR EVERYBODY.

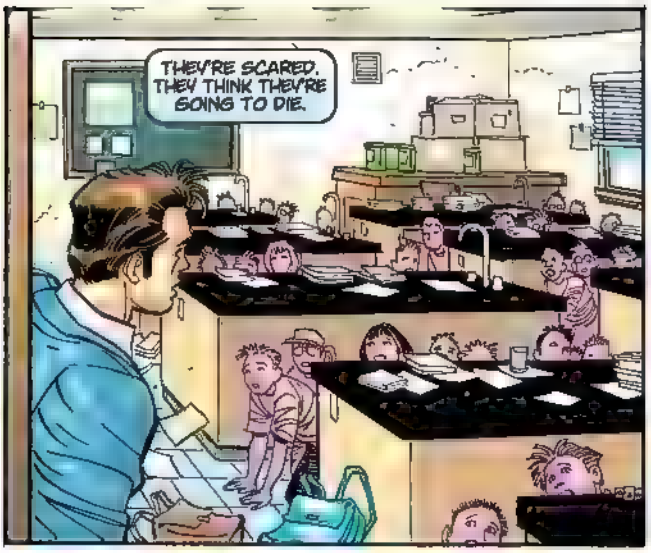

YES...?
UHM... I'M PETER PARKER... I CALLED ABOUT THE WORK EXPERIENCE TEACHING CREDENTIAL...
RIGHT... RIGHT...


I'LL JUST GET THE PAPERWORK.
STUPID SPIDER...

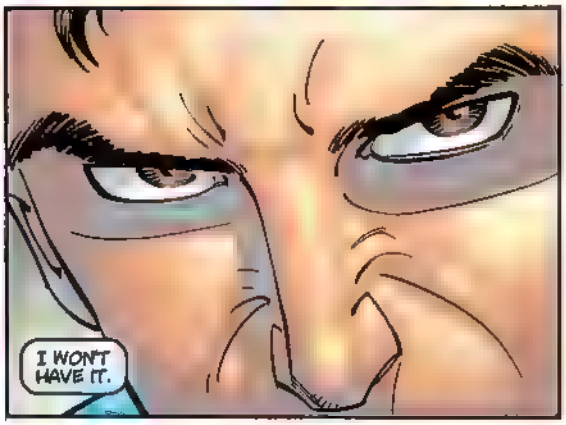
EXI
WHAT THE --

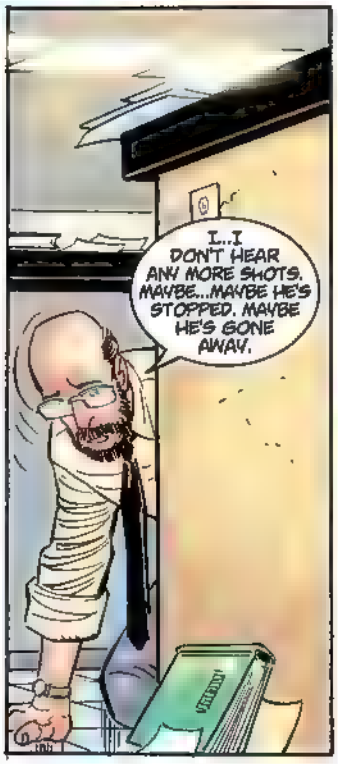
...GUN...
GUN!
EXIT
CRACK
CRACK CRACK
DOWN!
CRACK
CRACK
CRACK
I MOVE MYSELF WITHOUT THINKING, PUTTING MYSELF BETWEEN THEM AND THE BULLETS.
I HAVE TO MOVE SLOWER THAN USUAL TO AVOID HURTING THEM, BUT I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE ADDED RISK. I DON'T EVEN CARE ABOUT WHAT ANYONE MIGHT THINK IF THEY SEE ME.
THERE'S A TIME FOR SECRET IDENTITIES AND THERE'S A TIME TO SAVE LIVES AND BY GOD HE'S NOT GOING TO HURT THESE KIDS AND I DON'T CARE IF I GET KILLED DOING IT, HE'S NOT GOING TO GET TO THEM.
HE'S NOT.
HE'S NOT.

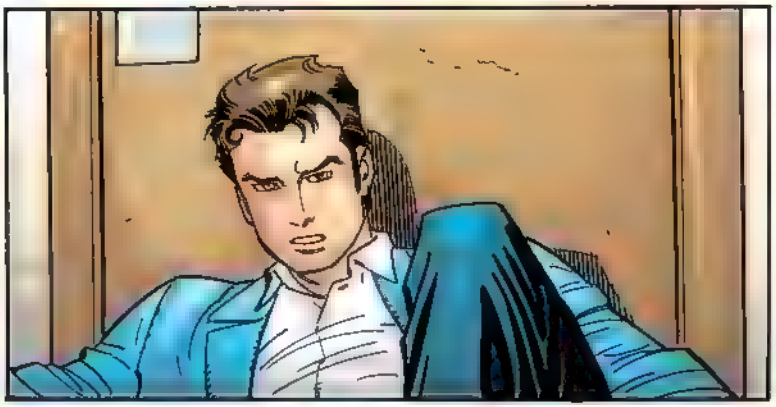
GOT YOU!


THEY'RE SCARED. THEY THINK THEY'RE GOING TO DIE.

IT'S NOT RIGHT. KIDS SHOULDN'T HAVE TO COME TO SCHOOL THINKING THEY'RE GOING TO DIE.

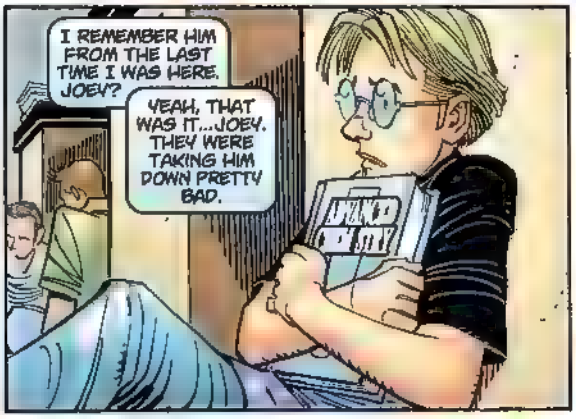

I WON'T HAVE IT.

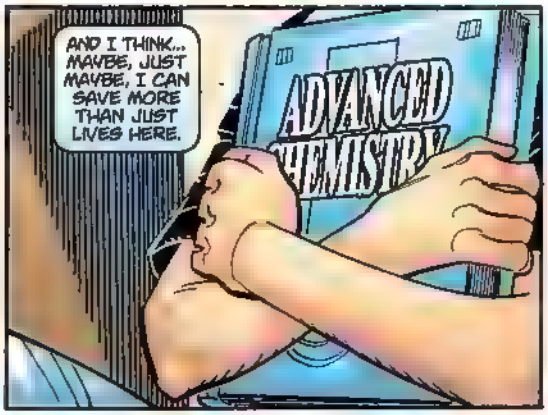

I...I DON'T HEAR ANY MORE SHOTS. MAYBE...MAYBE HE'S STOPPED. MAYBE HE'S GONE AWAY.



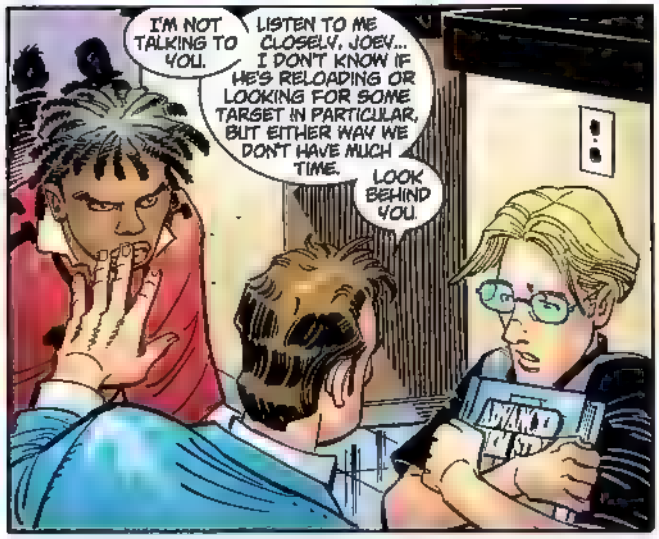
NO. HE'S INSIDE.

WHAT... WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO?
SHUT UP! YOU WANNA LET HIM KNOW WE'RE HERE, STUPID? BESIDES, YOU CAN'T DO SQUAT, YOU CREEP, SO YOU MAY AS WELL JUST SHUT UP.

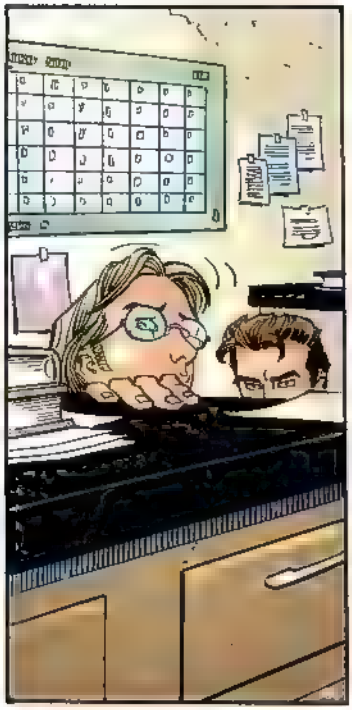

I REMEMBER HIM FROM THE LAST TIME I WAS HERE. JOEY?
YEAH, THAT WAS IT...JOEY. THEY WERE TAKING HIM DOWN PRETTY BAD.

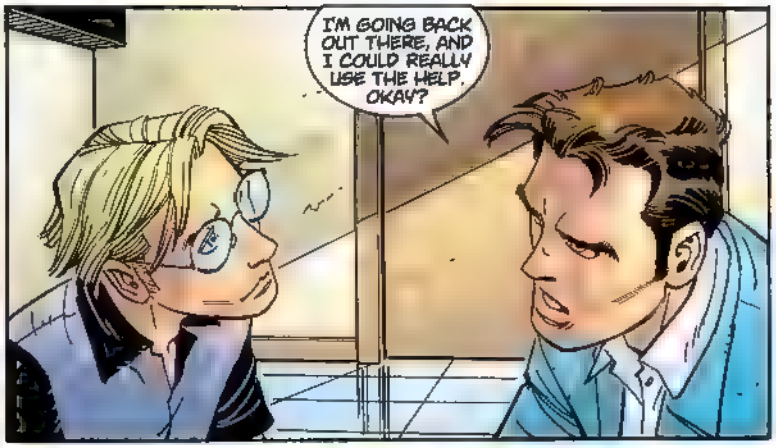

AND I THINK... MAYBE, JUST MAYBE, I CAN SAVE MORE THAN JUST LIVES HERE.
ADVANCED CHEMISTRY

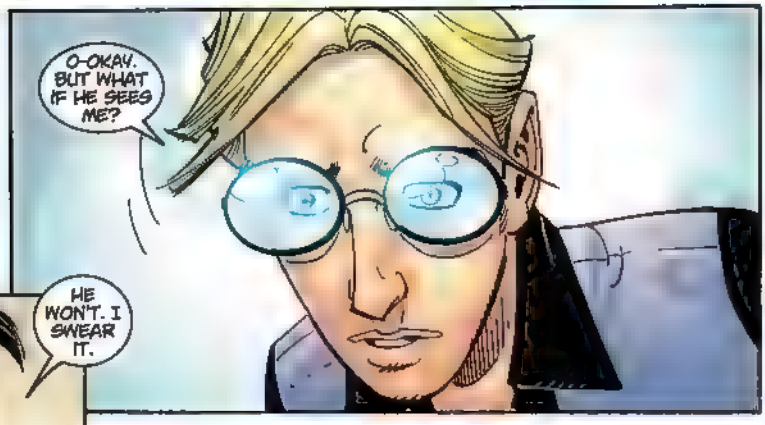
YOU'RE JOEY, RIGHT?
UH-HUH...
YOU PRETTY GOOD AT CHEMISTRY?
UH-HUH...
WHAT'RE YOU --

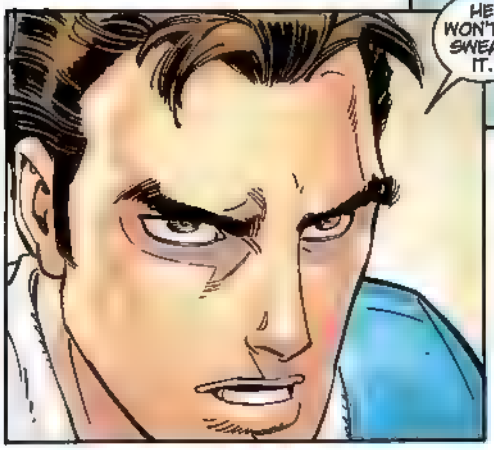

I'M NOT TALKING TO YOU.
LISTEN TO ME CLOSELY, JOEY... I DON'T KNOW IF HE'S RELOADING OR LOOKING FOR SOME TARGET IN PARTICULAR, BUT EITHER WAY WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME.
LOOK BEHIND YOU.

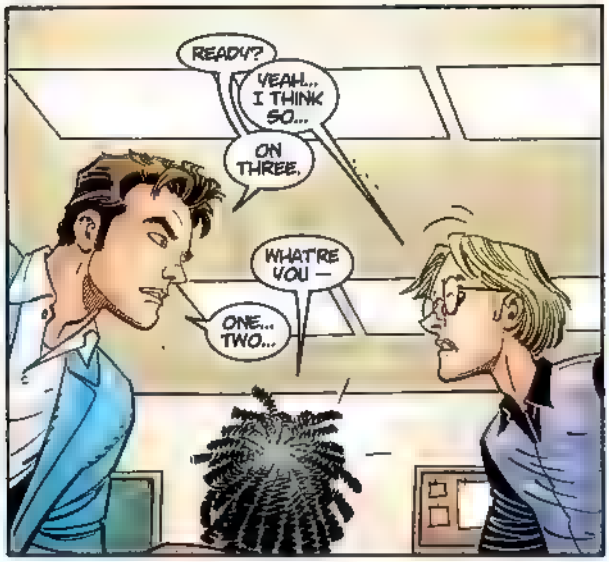
I'M THINKING HE CAN'T HIT WHAT HE CAN'T SEE. WHAT DO YOU THINK?

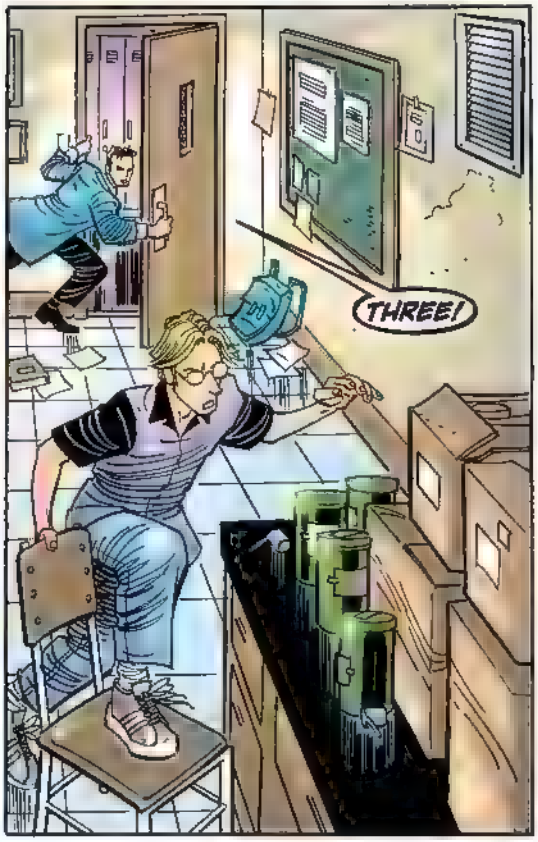



I'M GOING BACK OUT THERE, AND I COULD REALLY USE THE HELP. OKAY?


O-OKAY. BUT WHAT IF HE SEES ME?

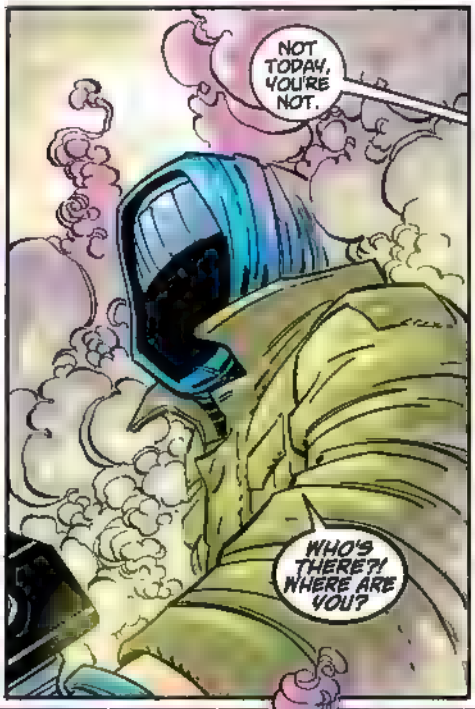

HE WON'T. I SWEAR IT.

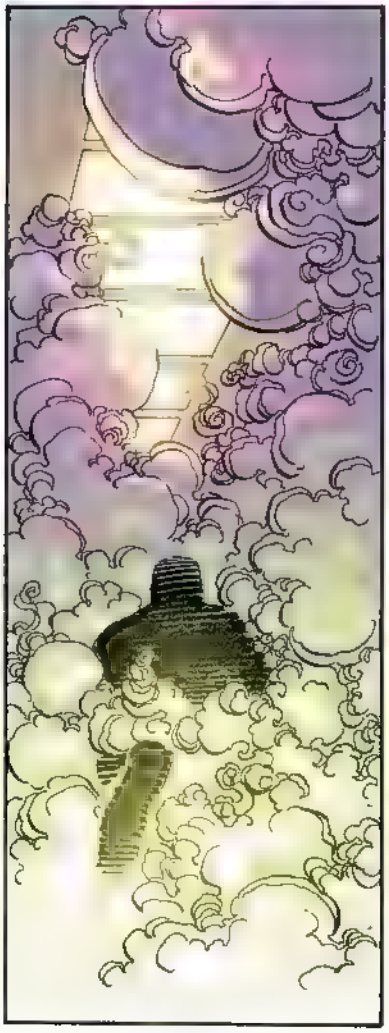

READY?
YEAH... I THINK SO...
ON THREE.
WHAT'RE YOU —
ONE... TWO...

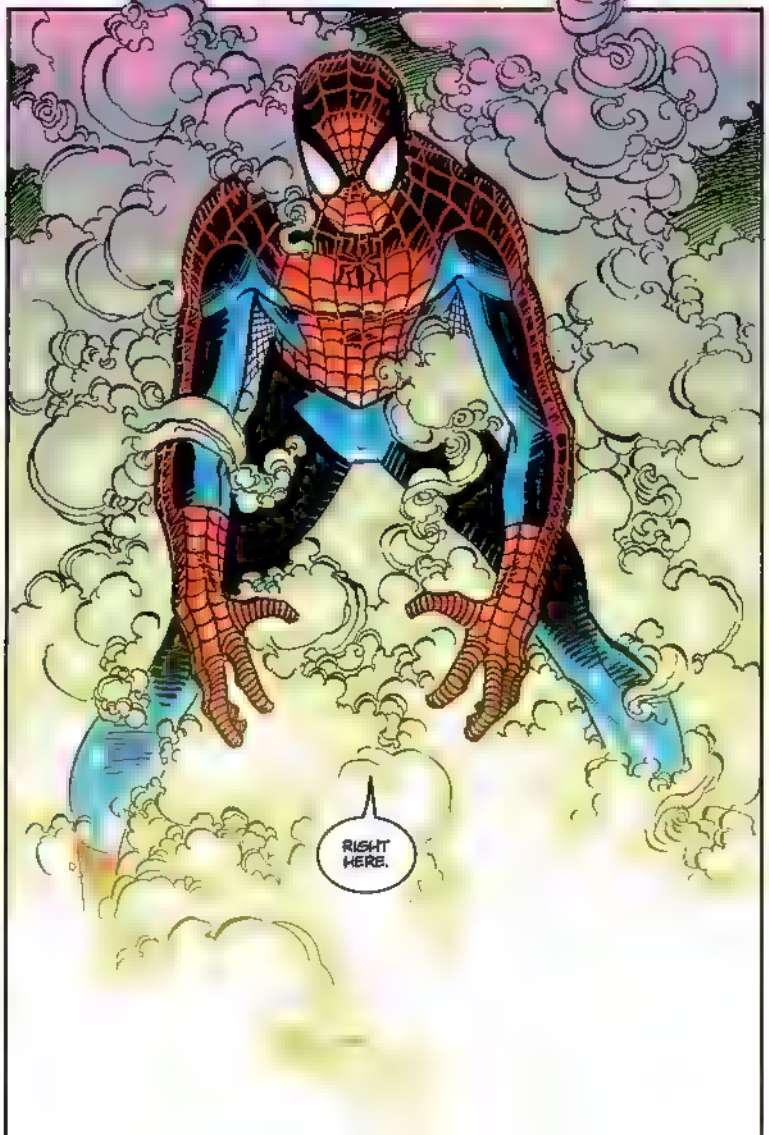

THREE!

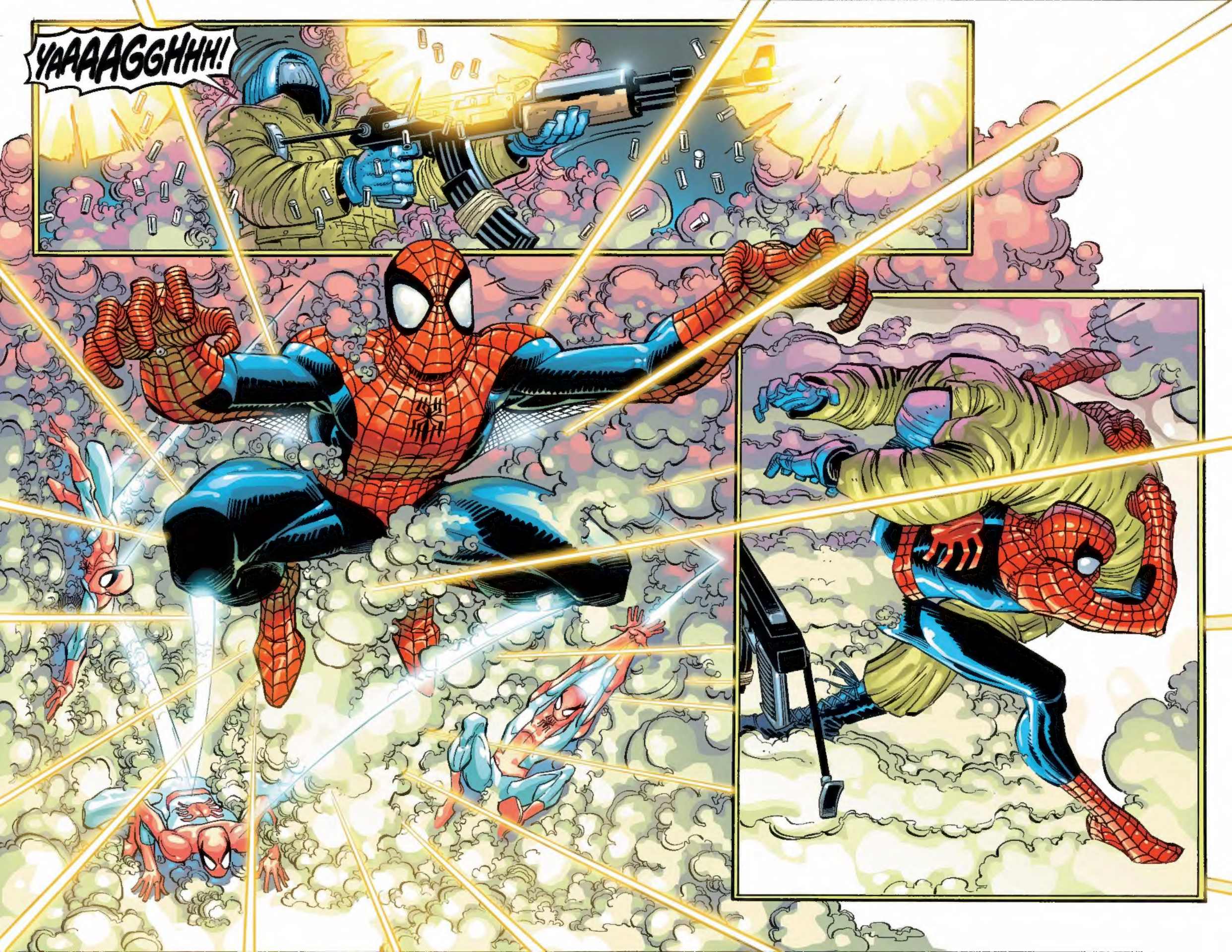
I CAN FIND THE SHOOTER. BUT I DON'T WANT HIM DOING ANY MORE HARM BEFORE I CAN GET MY HANDS ON HIM.
C'MON, JOEY, DON'T LET ME DOWN.
JOEY CASTONE! GET DOWN FROM THERE RIGHT NOW! I SAID GET DOWN—
— TANNIC ACID, WHERE'S THE TANNIC ACID —
I'LL HAVE YOU ON REPORT, YOUNG MAN!
GOT IT!
WHAT'S THAT... FIRE?
NO...THERE'S NO SMELL OF BURNING, STAY DOWN!
WAY TO GO, JOEY...WAY TO GO.

-COUGH-
-COUGH-
NOT FAIR...NOT FAIR...
I'M GONNA KILL YOU! I SWEAR TO GOD I'M GONNA KILL YOU!


NOT TODAY, YOU'RE NOT.
WHO'S THERE?! WHERE ARE YOU?




RIGHT HERE.


YAAAAGGHHH!

GET UP! WHO ARE YOU? WHAT'S WRONG WITH --
...OH MY GOD...
IT'S NOT FAIR...IT'S NOT FAIR...THEY KEEP BEATING ME UP ALL THE TIME...I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE... I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE...
I JUST CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE...
THE KID JUST SNAPPED.

I HAD HIM IN ONE OF MY CLASSES. A REAL SMART KID. AN "A" STUDENT. THEY SAID HE WAS A PRODIGY OR SOMETHING.
THE OTHER KIDS WERE PRETTY BRUTAL TO HIM. PICKED ON HIM FOR ALL THREE YEARS. BUT, Y'KNOW, YOU HAVE TO STAND UP ON YOUR OWN SOMETIMES.

DID YOU TRY TO STOP THEM?
I WARNED A COUPLE OF 'EM, BUT HE WAS KIND OF A GEEK, AN OUTSIDER, YOU KNOW? THEY WOULDN'T STOP HITTING HIM AND HE WOULDN'T STOP BEING WEIRD.
I GUESS HE COULDN'T TAKE IT. IT HAPPENS. KIDS SNAP. BUT WHO KNEW HE'D GO THIS FAR? AT LEAST NOBODY GOT HURT, THAT'S THE IMPORTANT THING.
I REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS TO GET BEATEN UP ALL THE TIME. I REMEMBER THE FRUSTRATION. THE FEAR.

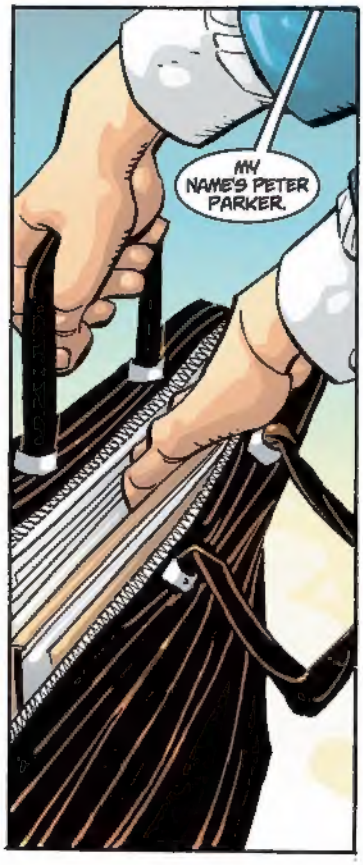
THE RAGE. THE MINDLESS RAGE THAT MAKES YOU FEEL YOU'D DO ANYTHING TO GET BACK AT THE ONES WHO BRING YOU PAIN FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN THEY THINK IT'S FUN.
THAT COULD HAVE BEEN ME. THAT COULD BE JOEY SOMEDAY.

I HEAR YOU HELPED SAVE SOME OF THE KIDS. GOOD FOR YOU.
AND YOU?
I WAS BACK BY THE RACQUETBALL COURT. FIGURED THE BEST THING I COULD DO WAS TO KEEP MY HEAD DOWN AND LET THE RIGHT PEOPLE DO THEIR JOB.

YEAH, WELL.... THEY DID. THEY DID THAT INDEED.
I QUIT... THAT'S IT, I'VE HAD IT, THIS PLACE IS A FREAKIN' JUNGLE, I'M OUTTA HERE!

I DON'T BLAME HIM. SCIENCE IS WASTED ON MOST OF THESE KIDS ANYWAY. A LOT OF 'EM ARE GOING NOWHERE FAST.
YEP. HE'S NOT THE FIRST ONE TO GET OUT OF HERE. WON'T BE THE LAST, EITHER.
WE ALL HAVE TO FACE THE TRUTH. YOU DO WHAT YOU CAN. BUT YOU CAN'T SAVE ALL OF THEM.
PHYS ED DEPT

SO, ANYWAY, I DIDN'T GET YOUR NAME.
WHO AM I?


MY NAME'S PETER PARKER.

I'M THE NEW SCIENCE TEACHER.
PARKER, P.
RESUME
COMING HOME